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May 25, 2004

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor, State of California
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

As we celebrate Memorial Day this year, our hearts and minds are with all of our current military personnel and veterans who have bravely served their country and committed themselves to defending the principles of freedom and liberty. Many veterans make the Central Coast of California their home and for years have been working hard to make a veteran's cemetery on the Central Coast a reality. I am writing to urge you to fully support the creation of a state veteran's cemetery on the former Fort Ord.

Part of our commitment to veterans is providing them a hallowed final resting place that properly honors their sacrifices. The nearest burial place for Central Coast veterans is hours away and inaccessible by public transportation. The proposed veteran's cemetery at Fort Ord would provide the 49,000 veterans of the 17th Congressional district, and over 100,000 other veterans on the Central Coast, the opportunity to lie in eternal rest in their own community at a site with substantial military history.

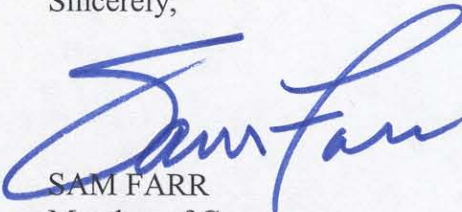
The unique opportunity of a veteran's cemetery at the former Fort Ord is only fully appreciated when examined in light of the region's long-term military history which began in 1846 with the Mexican-American War, and continued through 1994 when the base was closed. During this time Fort Ord came to occupy 28,600 acres, and was an integral infantry training center through 5 major military campaigns. For many Central Coast veterans Fort Ord is the epitome of their military experience and a veteran's cemetery on the former base would be a fitting memorial.

I have been working with the local veterans community to make the establishment of a cemetery at Fort Ord a reality. The Fort Ord Reuse Authority has approved a 156 acre site for the cemetery at no cost to the state; Congress has committed to 100% federal funding for the construction of the state cemetery, and an application for state cemetery construction funding for the Fort Ord site would be considered a federal priority.

I invite you to visit the proposed veteran's cemetery site at Fort Ord and to witness the magnitude of such a memorial on this former base that was prominent in so many service members' military lives.

The Central Coast veterans are counting on your support for a new state veteran's cemetery at Fort Ord.

Sincerely,



SAM FARR
Member of Congress

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